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Inside Wallops

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Black Hole Hunter Instrument Tested on NASA Balloon Flight At Edge Of Space

Scientists have successfully tested a key instrument for a next-generation gamma-ray telescope that will ultimately stare down the barrel of massive black hole particle jets.

The innovative gamma-ray detector, a prototype of a much larger detector which will be integrated into the Gamma-ray Large Area Space Telescope (GLAST) for a 2006 satellite launch, was tested on a 29 million-cubic-foot NASA scientific balloon that flew for three hours from Palestine, Texas, on August 4 at 124,000 feet, above 99.5 percent of the atmosphere.

The model had the same types of detectors that will be used on the satellite: a plastic scintillator anticoincidence detector built by Goddard; a silicon strip tracker built by the University of California at Santa Cruz; a CsI calorimeter provided by the Naval Research Laboratory; and a data acquisition system built by SLAC and Stanford University.

"The success of the high-altitude balloon flight of the Large Area Telescope prototype achieves a critical milestone for the GLAST mission," said Peter Michelson of Stanford

University, Principal Investigator for the GLAST Large Area Telescope. "It is a validation of the instrument design we will fly on GLAST. This design incorporates state-of-the-art technology that allows an extraordinary leap forward in capability."



The GLAST payload is prepared for launch on a NASA scientific balloon.

NSBF Photo

This was a joint effort by researchers at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC), Stanford University, the University of California Santa Cruz, the Naval Research Laboratory, and Hiroshima University in Japan

"The detector worked essentially flawlessly throughout the flight," said Dave Thompson, the Goddard scientist who led the project.

GLAST will study celestial gamma rays, particles of light millions to billions of times more energetic than visible light, which our eyes can detect, ultraviolet light and X rays.

GLAST also will study gamma-ray bursts, the most powerful explosions in the Universe, second only to the theoretical Big Bang. These mysterious bursts are detected by satellites almost daily, last only for a few seconds, and come to us from origins unknown.

The GLAST Balloon Flight Engineering Model was a working prototype of one of the 16 modules that will comprise the GLAST Large Area Telescope.

GLAST is an international collaboration of astrophysicists and particle physicists, with funding from NASA, the U.S. Department of Energy and agencies in France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Sweden. NASA's Scientific Balloon Program is managed by the Wallops Flight Facility. The National Scientific Balloon Facility, operated for NASA by New Mexico State University, conducted the balloon launch.

Wallops Shorts.....

WFD Assists Local Units

The Wallops Fire Department recently assisted local fire departments with two fires. The WFD sent an engine and crew to assist with a house fire in New Church on Aug. 3. On August 9, Wallops sent an engine and crew to assist Chincoteague Fire Department with a house fire.

Beach Cleanup
Sept. 15, 2001
8:30 a.m.
To volunteer, call x1579.

A Message to All GSFC Employees

We are more than halfway through the summer and have completed a tremendous amount of work this year.

Our projects have successfully launched the HESSI, MAP and GOES missions, and all are operating well. Other projects, like QuikTOMS, TIMED and TDRS, are near launch. At the same time, we have maintained progress on other important missions such as HST servicing, AQUA, VCL, and ICESAT.

We have expended significant effort to bring both Triana and VCL to a state of readiness while program resource issues and technology readiness issues are resolved.

We are working on a host of important missions for the future. Additionally, Goddard is greatly increasing the amount of work being done by our support functions, such as Independent Verification and Validation, implementation of the Agency IFMP effort and providing support to on-orbit operations in very difficult financial times.

We are also supporting a host of Principal Investigators, both internal and external, in preparing proposals for future missions while at the same time beginning the formulation of others. So, there is clearly a lot going on.

All of these efforts come at some cost in terms of increased work stress. We are busier than ever and are doing more work with fewer people.

Despite the obvious heavy workload, I want to remind you again that we very much want all of our Goddard employees to achieve a balance in their lives. Too many of our employees are working excessive hours under very stressful conditions.

There are always crises to deal with, but we have to put these into proper perspective when employee and family well-being is at stake.

I, therefore, urge you again to evaluate your employee's stress as well as your personal work stress situation and make sure that you and your employees take annual leave and vacation this year.

You and your family deserve it!

Al Diaz

Removal of Cats from Wallops Flight Facility

Effective immediately, the feeding, releasing or building of shelters for any animal at the Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) is prohibited. This is due to complaints of equipment damage and unsanitary work areas from cat urine and feces as well as concerns of human health and safety from other wildlife such as fox and raccoons that have been observed feeding at the numerous feeding sites.



All feeding areas will be cleaned and shelters removed. All cats found on WFF property will be captured using Hava-Hart style cage traps and transported to the Eastern Shore of Virginia’s SPCA facility in Onley.

Personnel in the family housing adjacent to WFF property are advised to properly identify their pets with identification tags and not allow them to stray on the WFF Main Base. Pets captured on WFF property can be picked up at the SPCA facility. There is a \$5 per day boarding fee and proof of rabies vaccination is required prior to picking up the pet. The SPCA is located at 26528 Lankford Highway, south of Nandua High School. The telephone number is (757) 787-7385.

Questions or concerns regarding this plan may be directed to Ed Sudendorf, WFF Airport Manager and Wildlife Program Coordinator, on x1240.

Enhance your career prospects

Classes are now available from Old Dominion University Teletechnet.

The following are some of the Fall 2001 classes offered at the Cropper Center or at Eastern Shore Community College in Melfa, Va. Call Jack Bonniwell at (757) 787-5590 or (757) 824-0763 for details. Information also is available at: <http://www.odu.edu/webroot/orgs/AO/TTNET/teletechnet.nsf>

- Intermediate and Managerial Accounting
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1998 Toyota Corolla. 35,000 miles, power windows/door locks, power steering ABS brakes, am/fm/cassette and CD player. 5-speed, cruise control, tilt steering, dual airbags, a/c. Call Pam Taylor on (410) 621-0568 after 5 p.m.

July was Wet and Mild

For the second year, the weather during July has been very mild and enjoyable.

The average temperature of 73 degrees was almost 3 degrees below the July average. On four days the high temperature was at least 10 degrees below average with the greatest difference being 15 degrees below normal on July 29. The reading for that date was a cool 69 degrees. The warmest day of the month was July 25 when the mercury climbed to 92 degrees. No record high temperatures were set or tied during July.

A record low of 54 degrees was set on July 3, the coolest night of the month. A reading of 60 degrees on July 29 also set a new daily record low. Another daily low was tied on July 14 at 58 degrees. With 21 days of below normal high temperatures and 20 nights with below normal temperatures, we should save a little on the electric bills.

July 2001 started out wet with just under an inch of rain falling on the 1st. The month ended with 2.25 inches of rainfall on July 29 and 30. Measurable rain fell on nine other days for a total rainfall of 5.21 inches, which is 1.27 inches above normal for July. Wallops normally has measurable rainfall on 10 days during July.

With summer winding down, many of us look forward to Labor Day and the mild temperatures that move in during September.

Average highs at the first of the month are in the low 80s and decrease to the low 70s by the end of the month. The record high temperature for September of 96 degrees occurred on Sept. 11, 1983. The record low of 40 degrees was set on Sept. 30, 1970. Expect rain to fall on seven days giving us a monthly average of 3.53 inches.

Although we are well into the Tropical Season, there have been only two tropical systems that have been named. The latest, Barry, developed in the Gulf of Mexico dumping heavy rain on the region. Keep an eye on developing weather systems and be prepared. Tropical storm activity usually peaks near the middle of September. Check your emergency supplies now and be ready to evacuate if required.

Summer officially ends in September, but it’s still a great month for outdoor activities.

Mark Your Calendar for These Upcoming WEMA Events

Presenting the first in a series of after work.....

T.G.I.F. Parties

5 p.m.
August 17
at the Rocket Club, Bldg. F-3

KARAOKE
featuring the birthday bunch:
Bill Beishline, Bonnie Maxfield,
Geoff Bland and Patsy Pless

Join us for the beginning of a spectacular line-up of T.G.I.F. parties.

British Night with Benny Hill

August 15
at the Rocket Club, Bldg. F-3

**Books, Cassette Tapes , CD's, Video Tapes
Puzzles
Paper Advertising Items
Jewelry Sale**

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
August 22
Bldg. E-2 Training Room

Get your tickets now for the PIG PICKIN'

5 p.m.
September 28
at the Pavilion

Pork, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Rolls and Fruit Dessert

Tickets are available at the Exchange Store, Building E-2 (ext. 2020) and at the Rocket Club, Building F-3 (ext. 1454)

\$8 per person
\$15 per couple
\$4 children under 12

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